



Report of External Evaluation and Review

South Pacific Islands Institute Limited
trading as South Pacific Islands
Institute (SPII)

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 15 March 2011

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Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Location:	Hamilton
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	1993
Number of students:	Domestic: 66 International: Nil
Number of staff:	Eight full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 3)• National Certificate in Beauty Services (Cosmetology) (Level 3)• National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 1) <p>Other active unit standard accreditations include Business Information Processing, English For Speakers of Other Languages, English Language, Communication Skills, Occupational Health and Safety Practice, and Work and Study Skills.</p>
Sites:	74 Commerce Street, Frankton (Head Office) 169 London Street, Hamilton.
Distinctive characteristics:	SPII educates and trains Pasifika peoples, Māori (the majority of its students), and a small but significant number of others from a wide range of ethnicities.
Recent significant changes:	NA

Previous quality assurance history:	At its most recent previous quality assurance event, an NZQA quality audit in 2008, SPII met all requirements for ongoing registration apart from one, not reporting results to NZQA in a timely manner.
Other:	SPII helps Pasifika, Māori, and other students to develop a belief in the value of education and employment and to nurture their own confidence in their educational and employment abilities, and provides them with the tools, skills, understanding, and positive attitudes needed to become successful in reaching their goals. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) supports SPII's training through its targeted Training Opportunities and Youth Training funds.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The following focus areas were included in the scope of the external evaluation and review:

- Training for employment skills, for mainly young people. This was chosen because it is a significant area of the education and training SPII delivers to about half of its students. It includes courses funded through Training Opportunities and Youth Training, and English for speakers of other languages.
- Training for mainly adult learners. This is the other significant area that SPII delivers to approximately half its students. The training comprises beauty services and early childhood education and care.

In addition, Ministry of Social Development (MSD)/Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) funds 15 SPII students on a work training programme focused on gaining employment. This was not specifically included in the scope.

In accordance with NZQA policy, the scope also included the mandatory focus area of governance, management, and strategy.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>

The EER team comprised one lead evaluator and a second evaluator. The team spoke with the managing director, manager, tutors, administrative staff, students, recent graduates from

SPII courses, and employers. The EER was conducted at SPII's Frankton site and included a visit to its Hamilton Youth Centre.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **South Pacific Islands Institute Limited trading as South Pacific Islands Institute (SPII)**. The key reasons for this include:

- SPII students achieve a wide range of outcomes. These include increased confidence, self-management skills, personal well-being, life skills, employability, and the capability to go on to further education. Other outcomes include unit standard credits, national certificates, further education, and jobs. These outcomes benefit all SPII's students, including at-risk youth. Pasifika students in particular achieve very highly in all these outcomes.
- Early Childhood Education (ECE) graduates who go on to further education do so at other providers including the University of Waikato. Twelve students had been accepted by the Waikato Institute of Technology (WINTeC) to advance to the level 4 and level 5 beauty diplomas at the time of the EER visit.
- Such achievements benefit not only the students themselves but also their families, communities, and the community at large. Benefits include making positive life and work choices, simple lifestyle improvements, voluntary work in the community, and participation within a Pasifika cultural context such as early childhood education and care.
- SPII programmes and activities match the needs of the students very well. Examples include identifying and addressing individual needs, regular programme reviews, initiatives and improvements that add value to students' learning, provision of literacy assistance and sporting activities, and involvement in the community through fund-raising at local markets.
- SPII students engage with their learning, which is practical and soundly related to theory. The teaching is highly effective. It is well planned and structured, takes place in highly suitable surroundings, meets the needs of students, and adds value to their learning. The teaching is facilitated and assessed by suitably qualified, experienced, and highly committed tutors who use a variety of learning and teaching practices which students appreciate.
- SPII guides and supports its students very well. Support extends to administrative support, interview preparation and support at higher education panels, community liaison, family meetings, and counselling. SPII staff strongly believe that their investment of time outside the classroom, which is well beyond what can be reasonably expected, pays off in the classroom.
- Governance and management support educational achievement very effectively. SPII shares a common vision with staff and works to ensure that students achieve their goals. Students and staff feel well resourced and supported. SPII's internal

and external relationships are strong. SPII makes its decisions in the interests of its students.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **South Pacific Islands Institute Limited trading as South Pacific Islands Institute (SPII)**. The key reasons for this include:

- SPII has detailed information on student achievement of unit standard credits and qualifications, including data about the proportion of students who go on to further study or employment. It provides this and other information to its key funder, TEC, and MSD/WINZ as required.
- SPII tracks, monitors, and maintains individual student unit standard and qualification completions and retentions through daily interactions, weekly staff meetings, tutors' weekly, quarterly, end-of-course and end-of-year reporting, and through individual student interviews. Reasons for non-achievement are determined and addressed. However, SPII would benefit from investigating further and addressing the possible reasons for the different levels of achievement of Pasifika and non-Pasifika students (the majority of its students are Māori, but there is also a small but significant number of students from a range of ethnicities).
- SPII has agreed that it would also benefit from exploring and developing how it captures data other than that required by funders. This data would include documenting the longer-term destination outcomes of students and the many rich stories about individual student successes. Investigation could also include consideration of any general common themes, patterns, or trends in how long students are taking to achieve to see if they can do so within shorter timeframes, but without damaging the very supportive environment in which students currently learn.
- SPII has many rich stories of the achievements of its students while attending SPII and after they leave. These stories also reflect the value of the wide range of outcomes that students achieve. However, SPII has agreed that development of its capture of stakeholder information from stakeholders such as employers would strengthen its self-assessment. This would further increase its knowledge and understanding of the value of outcomes for key stakeholders other than students and may lead to further improvements.
- SPII is very aware of the benefits its education and training bring, not only to its students but also to their families and wider communities. However, the organisation is also aware of the risk in relying on one main funder. SPII has identified that succession planning is important, so that in the unlikely event of reduced funding or the long-term unavailability of the managing director or manager, it would continue to operate effectively.

TEO response

South Pacific Islands Institute (SPII) Limited trading as South Pacific Islands Institute has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Students achieve important outcomes which benefit them in both the short and long term. These outcomes include increased confidence, self-management skills, personal well-being, employability, the capability to go on to further education, and life skills. The outcomes benefit all SPII's students, including at-risk youth. Pasifika students in particular achieve very highly in all these outcomes.

SPII students achieve unit standards or formal qualifications. The knowledge and skills they gain are important because they enable students to go on to further study and/or gain employment. SPII is aware that in 2009 it did not quite meet TEC's threshold for the proportion of students going into employment or on to further education and training, though Pasifika learners exceeded the threshold. However, SPII's data shows that it has every reason to be confident that in 2010 it will meet the threshold for students overall, as it has consistently done in the past.

SPII tracks, monitors, and maintains individual student unit standard and qualification completions and retentions through daily interactions, weekly staff meetings, tutors' weekly, quarterly, end-of-course and end-of-year reporting, and individual student interviews. Reasons for non-achievement are determined and addressed. SPII would benefit from investigating further and addressing the possible reasons for the different levels of achievement of Pasifika and non-Pasifika students (mainly Māori, but also a small number of students from a range of ethnicities). SPII has agreed that it would also benefit from exploring and developing how it captures data other than that required by funders. This data would include longer-term destination outcomes of students and the many rich stories about individual student successes. SPII may also benefit from consideration of common themes, patterns, or trends in how long students are taking to achieve, to see if they can do so within shorter timeframes without damaging the very supportive environment in which students currently learn and achieve. This could also contribute to meeting MSD targets in 2011.

¹ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Foundation courses, whether in Youth Training, Training Opportunities, ECE, or beauty therapy, enable students to go on to employment or further education. Some ECE, and particularly beauty, students gain employment in areas other than those they have studied and graduated in. The knowledge and skills they learn enable students to gain employment in the short or long term. Their success, like that of Youth Training and Training Opportunities students, comes from the basic employment, communication, work, community, and language skills they acquire at SPII. However, a healthy and increasing proportion of ECE and beauty graduates do go on to employment or further study in their area of study.

ECE graduates who go on to further education do so at other providers, including the University of Waikato. At the time of the evaluation visit, 12 students had already been accepted by WINTEC to advance to the level 4 and level 5 beauty diplomas. The number of students in this new initiative is expected to grow and become an increasingly high proportion of beauty students. Based on previous experience of SPII graduates, WINTEC observed that the practical skills of SPII graduates are very advanced and their knowledge and understanding of theory, including industry vocabulary, are well grounded. WINTEC confirmed that SPII graduates compare very favourably with those from other providers and are far better prepared and successful than those who enter WINTEC courses without previous experience and training. Such feedback is consistent with that of recent SPII beauty graduates and those still training; they have confidence in their practical skills and related theory. WINTEC added that it had also trained male SPII beauty graduates, an underrepresented group in the beauty industry. WINTEC found SPII graduates open-minded in their approach to training and willingness to learn.

Students and staff gave examples of the value of the training, not only for the students but also for their families and communities. Students and staff provided examples of students making positive life and work choices including improved family relationships, resuming previously disrupted training, and obtaining and retaining employment. Parents noticed simple improvements, such as their son or daughter not swearing at home and improved relationships in the family and community. The EER team also heard of how some students' families use the students' experience at SPII to organise and plan their own family activities. Beauty students provide voluntary services at churches and in the community, which generates good will, strengthens the community, gives students additional training, and promotes SPII and the opportunities it provides. Na Hau E Fa, the only Pasifika early childhood centre in Hamilton, supports SPII students who work within a cultural context and increase their own knowledge and skills while at the same time supporting the centre and the community. In addition, students are involved in the community through fund-raising at local markets.

SPII students, management, staff, and stakeholders shared many rich stories which clearly showed the value of outcomes to both students and their wider families and communities.

While much of this feedback is informal or anecdotal, it is nevertheless valid. SPII also gathers client evaluations and testimonials which are very positive and supportive. It has a good knowledge of the destinations of graduates, partly because of their close-knit communities and networks, including churches, and also the relatively small population of Hamilton. The alumni book, including newspaper clippings, is a very useful record of students' success after they leave SPII. However, SPII has agreed that development of its capture of stakeholder feedback, and integration with other and additional information captured formally from stakeholders, such as employers, would strengthen its self-assessment. This would also increase its knowledge and understanding of the value of outcomes for key stakeholders other than students and may lead to further improvements.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

SPII students' needs are paramount in the thinking, planning, and delivery of the programmes and activities, which match student needs very well. For example, each student's needs are identified prior to or at commencement at SPII and individual goals are set with the student. Thereafter, students are regularly assessed, their progress monitored, and goals updated as appropriate. This reflects an organisation that is highly student-centred.

All programmes have a practical orientation related to theory, which is also regarded as important. Students, tutors, and other stakeholders support the attention paid to practical work and how that helps to increase knowledge and understanding of theory as well as practice. Students also appreciate guest speakers and mentors because they help inspire and motivate them and increase their knowledge of a particular industry.

Students' engagement was evident from the interviews the EER team conducted with students and tutors. SPII listens to students, considers student feedback at any time as well as regular formal feedback, and responds by making improvements wherever appropriate. Tutors and staff are expected to sign off a response book for any actions taken or improvements made. The same process applies to SPII's response to student council feedback.

SPII reviews its programmes regularly. This ensures that the programmes and activities match the needs of students and other stakeholders. Currently, beauty students receive training in waxing, which gives them a skill in addition to what they need for the level 3 qualification. Although SPII is not currently accredited to assess the related unit standard and students cannot include waxing in their Record of Achievement (ROA), the additional knowledge and skill gives them an advantage, including the confidence to perform additional clinical tasks when they go on to further study or work. SPII is currently developing an application to extend its accreditation to include nail technology, which will, like waxing, add to the value and quality of the training students receive.

In order to improve beauty students' appearance, to ensure training is at industry standards, and to assist with gaining practical experience and future employment, SPII introduced a uniform which is sponsored, worn at all times, and monitored by the students themselves and staff. The uniform helps ensure that the training, which takes place in purpose-decorated Pasifika facilities, is as professional as possible and simulates good actual practice. It also gives students pride in themselves and self-confidence, which they and their tutors said were previously lacking. First Aid training also contributes to developing these attributes.

At the time of the EER, SPII was finalising a partnership agreement with WINTEC in Hamilton, which was to be effective from 2011 and might include scholarships. This agreement is intended to enable students to stay in Hamilton with their families without having to go to Auckland to complete further beauty studies. SPII and WINTEC expect that the 12 students already accepted by WINTEC to study up to diploma level will increase in number in future, to the mutual advantage of WINTEC and SPII. However, SPII has maintained its relationship with its historical Auckland provider in case different needs and opportunities arise in the future.

Tutors regularly discuss students' needs with the students, both individually and collectively. Weekly staff meetings discuss and act on student progress. Tutors plan three months ahead to ensure that students' needs are met in both the short term and long term.

Students and staff enjoy social outings which help enhance good and successful working relationships and interactions during learning and teaching. Student and family counselling and literacy support are readily available at SPII. These activities and services address students' personal needs and support achievement.

SPII bases its initiatives and improvements on sound self-assessment of individual and employer needs.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

SPII learners are engaged with their learning. This is because it is well planned and structured, takes place in highly suitable physical surroundings, and focuses on meeting the needs of its students and adds value to their learning experience.

Learning takes place in very appropriate SPII facilities. Youth students enjoy a range of engaging facilities at the SPII Youth Centre. Facilities include a recording studio which students use to record their own music. They compose their own lyrics which helps develop their literacy skills. The centre has computers, gym exercise equipment, and a table tennis table. It also has individual lockers, a comfortable recreational area, and a student kitchen. Mentors, including Chiefs and All Blacks rugby players, not only visit and motivate students but also use the centre. The centre represents in a very tangible way how much SPII values the youth students they educate and train. This is very important because the at-risk students in particular find the centre conveniently located and a homely and safe

environment. Students resisted a SPII proposal to relocate to another venue and SPII took on board the objections and did not proceed.

Beauty students train in an attractive and professional surrounding which simulates an actual retail beauty salon and has a distinctive Pasifika flavour. This enables students to hone their practical skills on clients who are family members or friends in an environment in which they feel comfortable, while preparing them for further study and work. ECE students learn at SPII in an early childhood classroom which is similar to those that the students train and work in externally, and helps make their training at SPII all the more authentic.

The EER team interviewed students from all programmes. They all commented very favourably on the qualities of their teachers and the learning facilities. Teachers are all suitably qualified and experienced and undergo appropriate ongoing professional development, including literacy, which enables them to be highly effective communicators and facilitators of learning. Tutors are also very collegial and share their practices, challenges, and solutions. They also go well beyond what students might reasonably expect, for example by offering transport to SPII.

Students commented positively on the variety of learning and teaching practices which help them engage in their learning. Students are encouraged to internalise their own motivation to the extent, for example of deciding if and when they undertake beauty assessments. While a few students had concerns about this approach, they also understood the need to take responsibility for completing assessments if they are to gain their qualification. Most students complete their assessments when they are ready, but do so in a timely manner. Such is the importance SPII attaches to student-centred learning that it monitors the effectiveness of its performance by the satisfaction and engagement of the students as well as their results.

Not only do tutors assess students when they are ready, but they also do so appropriately, for example, orally where writing skills are not being assessed. The fitness for purpose and consistency of assessment is monitored internally by SPII tutors who moderate each others' materials and decisions, robustly based on their training and experience. The success of this approach results in positive feedback from students, even those who have to repeat their assessment, and good external moderation results.

Internal, as well as external, moderation contributes to SPII's self-assessment. So too do student, tutor, and external feedback and initial and ongoing individual student needs assessment. Self-assessment information contributes to ongoing improvements, such as the provision of computers, redecoration of the beauty treatment rooms, and the SPII beauty course uniforms. SPII values its students highly and its student-centred approach adds value to their learning.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

SPII students are guided and supported very well. SPII strongly believes that staff investment of time outside the classroom well beyond what can be reasonably expected pays off in the classroom. It supports positive interactions between students and tutors and students and their peers. Students are provided with initial and ongoing information and advice which is thorough, timely, and readily understood. Assessment provides both students and tutors with good feedback on student progress. Information is related to the students' individual plans which are updated based on identifying their changing needs.

SPII promotes self-motivation rather than handholding. However, it also provides considerable support which goes well beyond successful academic achievement but is vital to the success of students. This support includes a number of factors: a high degree of administrative support; interview preparation and support at higher education panels which determine entry into polytechnics or universities; community liaison with agencies such as MSD/WINZ and Child, Youth and Family; family meetings; and counselling. Graduations are important occasions which provide family and community support, acknowledge student achievement, and inspire current students and others to study and achieve.

SPII's guidance supports immediate and longer-term student achievement. It creates a total learner environment which is safe and comfortable to the extent that a student experiencing personal or family upset or trauma can get immediate counsel from SPII staff and/or professional counselling. Students and staff told many stories of how students' studies, placed at risk from factors outside their control, were rescued immediately or in the longer term.

Just how well SPII guides and supports its students was confirmed by the EER team and SPII's feedback from a variety of sources such as informal and formal student feedback, testimonials from past students, student councils, the alumni, former students who have gone on to attend other TEOs, MSD/WINZ, WINTEC, and the community. Support extends to students who have left SPII but return and are more than willing to share their experiences with current students.

1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

SPII's vision is to help Pasifika peoples and others to develop a belief in the value of education and employment, to nurture their own confidence in their educational and employment abilities, and provide them with the tools, skills, understanding, and positive attitudes needed to become successful in reaching their goals, in a Pasifika environment which they can relate to. This vision is clearly shared by the managing director, manager,

administrative staff, and all tutors who together go out of their way to achieve it. Daily interactions of all staff and students and weekly, monthly, three-monthly, mid- and end-of-year reporting all support achievement of SPII's shared vision. So too do regular programme and resource reviews and actions, accessing external advice when needed, developing staff to the extent of supporting them when they wish to accept new opportunities and leave, and only recruiting staff who can clearly help achieve SPII's vision.

The EER team was impressed by the governance and management of SPII. It is aware of its vulnerability in terms of reliance on TEC funding but has not as yet really considered other options. On the other hand, it has responded positively to taking up the MSD-funded "one-chance" training for at-risk youth for 2011 on a six-monthly basis. SPII is confident that it can meet MSD's requirements, achieve ongoing funding, and boost its total credit and qualification completion to see a higher proportion of students going on to further education or into jobs.

SPII students and staff feel very supported in their endeavours which are based on shared goals. Management and staff expressed their strong intellectual and emotional commitment to their students' success and personal growth. Such moments reflected the passion that all staff bring to their work. SPII listens to its students and staff and readily provides suitable resources on a day-to-day basis and longer-term capital resource investment according to its capacity to do so, always giving reasons if it is unable to do so immediately.

SPII governance and management consistently make decisions in the interests of the students, as in the examples of its relationship with WINTEC, the training in waxing and nail technology, and the youth centre as referred to earlier in this report. SPII is also aware of the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the beauty standards-setting body, the Hairdressing Industry Training Organisation. It realises the importance of good relationships with the University of Waikato, WINTEC, and in particular MSD/WINZ.

SPII is very aware of the benefits its education and training bring to not only its students, but to their families and wider communities. It maintains good and effective relationships with stakeholders such as churches and Na Hau E Fa referred to earlier in this report. Governance and management support educational achievement very effectively in every way. However, the organisation would benefit from improving its capture and use of data, as referred to earlier in this report. This would include investigating further and addressing the possible reasons for the different levels of achievement of Pasifika and non-Pasifika students. SPII has agreed to consider succession planning so that in the unlikely event of reduced funding or the unavailability of the managing director or manager, it could continue to operate effectively.

Focus Areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

2.2 Focus area: Training for mainly young people

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

2.3 Focus area: Training for mainly adult learners

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations other than those expressed or implied in this report.

Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.

The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz).

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>

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